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Maine Farmer.

S. L. BOARDMAN, Agricultural Editor.

Alm and Scope of the Farmers' Paper.

The prime object of a farmer's newspaper, an agricultural journal, is the diffusion of information about the business of the farm. It is a means of communication between farmers themselves, who live long distances apart—a channel through which one may tell another how he has succeeded in performing a piece of work a new way, how he may avoid an injury which he has experienced, or gather satisfactory results from a particular effort. Its aim is not unlike that of one good farmer, who tells another, leaning over the division fence of their farms, how he raised his great crop of wheat; and from the time when the editor of the *New England Farmer* published in Boston, went out to Jamaica Plain, more than fifty years ago, "with a view of obtaining information concerning the worms called *bored*, so as to beat the infestation of the farm of Mr. John Prince," to the present day; the aim and object of the farmer's paper has been the gathering and dissemination of facts and information which should enable the farmer to carry on his business more accurately, and therefore more profitably; to make him acquainted with the foes and enemies to the destruction of his crops, that he might know how to overcome them, and impart to him the experiences and results of others' labors in order that he might turn them to his own advantage. And that agricultural journal, which carries out this idea in its publication, will, other things being equal, accomplish the most good and secure the largest measure of success.

But as the greatest always includes the less, there is incorporated with this idea of the leading aim of a farmer's journal, another object which it should have in view: that of guiding and leading the farmer in his work. The farmer's paper should never be slower than any of its correspondents—however fast they may be—in the rear of any of its subscribers, though they be the best farmers on the continent. It must be filled with the mission of progress and improvement; quick to catch the spirit of the season, and by its timely suggestions give to every farmer's work the true key-note of success and profit; or by its study of the times, and its knowledge of coming events, which cast their shadows before." warn him against failure in certain directions. Its conductor should be so familiar with every branch of farm work that he can give intelligent advice concerning its performance, and make suggestions which will prove of positive advantage to all readers; and his opinions are only to be brought to the estimation of those of his correspondents, only when he has within his reach the means of giving more reliable information on a particular subject, or from his long study of a matter is able to bring to bear upon it the accumulated thought, and wisdom, and opinion of learned men everywhere, whom may have made of it a special investigation. Even if he does not himself shovel manure or milk cows, he may be able from having access to the accumulated thought of agricultural writers and thinkers in both hemispheres during the past generation, and from the results of investigations and experiments, in many branches of the art and science of farming—to give to the working farmer more information and better advice than he could himself evolve from his own farm and brain in a lifetime of work and study. The farmer's paper, therefore, must guide, and direct, and lead. The farmer who consults it, expects to gain information, and, he has a right, to demand that it shall be so conducted, as to be his teacher and instructor. When it fails to combine the imparting of knowledge, with the spirit of a workman who needs not to be ashamed, it is not carrying out its true mission.

The only change we can see in the scope and aim of the farmer's paper now, over that of half a century back, is in spirit rather than in matter. It is, if anything, more progressive; it aims to suggest action more than to record what has been done; to incite to effort rather than to be content with presenting facts or imparting information; it is showing to its readers ways and methods which will bring highest satisfaction, instead of waiting for its readers to tell what they have done;—so that while its prime object is still unchanged, its spirit and scope have been enlarged and intensified. It is truly claiming too much to say that a true agricultural journal—one devoted to the farmer's best interests—is now, a laboratory, a college, a library, an experimental station combined, each vying with the other as to which can best serve the farmer's good, and all striving to educate him to be a more thoughtful, scientific, earnest man, able to cope with the profound mysteries of his business, and to accomplish the best results from his labors.

Believing that the MAINE FARMER has had some share in bringing about the better results which are apparent in the present agricultural system of the State, and that it is carrying out, in part at least, what has been claimed for the true agricultural newspaper above; it makes its how to its subscribers, contributors and friends on its FORTY-SIXTH volume. The oldest paper of its class, in continuous publication, in New England, it has ever stood firm for the farmer's cause, and for the improvement and elevation of his calling. It has not missed a single weekly issue for a period of forty-five years, and its pages have never given an uncertain sound. Pledged to the cause of good farming, high culture, good stock, the development of industrial resources, the diffusion of intelligence, the welfare of living, the best interests of home, country and humanity—it steps across the threshold of a new volume, with unabated zeal and unflinching courage to the warfare against ignorance, slovenly farming, poor agricultural practices, unwholesome citizenship, intemperance, and every vice which afflicts society or mars civilization. With these objects in view, we ask the support and assistance of all good persons, so long as we are faithful to these high truths.

Unlike most political and sectarian journals, which depend for their increased circulation largely upon the seal of office or church workers, the MAINE FARMER wins its way slowly by dint of merit and excellence. Its publishers offer no chromos or gold washes as inducements to subscribers, nor do they club with the London Times or *Paris Gazette*. They pursue the steady, legitimate business of publishing at the lowest living rates, the best paper which they can get for it, and they give to every subscriber the worth of his money. An increase of its list would enable the publishers to make a better paper, we suggest if our numerous subscribers could do a better thing for them selves and us, than to present the claims of our Journal to their friends, and by inducing some to subscribe thereby help to bring about a result of which they themselves would reap proportionate advantages. While our friends are thinking and acting in this direction, (being sure in advance of our grateful acknowledgements for whatever they may do for us,) our publishers are getting ready the books for volume FORTY-SIX, in which they hope to record the names of HOSTS OF NEW SUBSCRIBERS!

Farm-Yard Manure.

If one tries to read all that is written now-a-days concerning plant food, the uses of fertilizers, and the value of certain forms or concentrated or artificial manures, he will need to devote a good deal of time just to keep up with what is said on this one matter alone; and often, after reading the writings of some of our scientific teachers, he will come to the conclusion that farm yard manure is really of little account; that it is of slight value as plant food, that in a thousand pounds of it 986 pounds are absolutely worthless or only useful to keep bare ground out of idleness by shoveling it over, and that it is far better to use a few pounds of some patent chemical mixture, which may be carried about in a bag, and which will give the same result, rather than be caring so much bulky farm dressing and doing so much hard work. But however correct the reasoning of some of these learned men, whose ability no one questions, or however positive the results which chemical analyses have determined in regard to this matter, we are just so old fashioned as to yet maintain unbound faith in farm yard manure, properly protected, managed and applied, as the very article needed to restore fertility to our farms, produce good crops and completely meet the expectations of every farmer who applies it as a fertilizer.

Everybody will admit the statements made by scientific agriculturists concerning the laws of plant growth and the relations of man to the crop. We all understand that plants never take up and assimilate food in solid forms; that they must obtain upon which they feed and grow in a gaseous state from the atmosphere, which amounts to fully ninety-five per cent of their entire food, or in a liquid condition through the soil; and that the food elements in farm yard manure go through certain chemical changes before the plant can avail itself of them. We also accept the facts which laboratory tests give, that a thousand pounds of this undecomposed manure will yield on a average but five pounds of nitrogen, six and a half pounds of potash and a mere trifle of phosphate of animal origin; the mere secondary elements of plant food, of which it is essential to supply the soil for the perfect growth of all farm crops. So far we agree with those who advocate the use of patent chemical mixtures as fertilizers, because we recognize them as the truths of science—but beyond these we cannot.

Many will still remember with pleasure our former resident and old friend Moses Taber, an occasional correspondent of the FARMER from Ohio, who will be surprised to learn he has grown old so fast of late, as in a former article we made him say he is 78, and yet has a lively interest in all Maine industries and people, and writes a hand as uniform and beautiful as copper-plate.

Heon Fred Atwood of Winterville places mistakes will occur! In the article of Henry Poor in our last issue, in the middle of the second paragraph, for "six bushels of Maize corn has as much value as four bushels of Illinois corn"—the reader will please substitute *six* in place of *four*. In speaking of the western corn, and it will then stand in accordance with the original statement of our careful correspondent.

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The Maine Farmer. An Agricultural and Family Newspaper.

Poetry.

Cannons Sense.

The highest sense is common sense;
It is the sense we all have in hand;
While fancy, plumed in gay pretense,
Is making ready to command us.
I'll tell you what I think; the land,
Toil that no tasks defer,
Gives us thoughts straight and sense.
All work with force intense.

It rises with the rising sun;
And much of its work is done
Before the dreamer has begun.
To the sun,
The blossoms on the thorn
Are the first to wake.

The dewy and sky of morn
Inspire us with its glow.

With sunburned hands it rests the grain
That grows in the field; and
Lies cool beneath the crooked wain,
White lily loitered in the lane.

And the flowers and buds were white;

The happy harvest home
Is the first to come.

Sing the flag from dome
And spire and roof tree.

It shucks not from life's toll and care;
Can it be that the sense of power,
It finds no fault with common sense?

If it has wealth, it always share.

The world is full of beauty,

With care it allows day.

In a word, it's sense,

Good fortune yields to fate.

Should fortune yield to fate.

Our Story Teller.

NEY DAY'S CALICO DRESS.

BY ROSE TERRY COOKE.

"What shall I wear, mammy?" And like

the Nelly looked up into her mother's face, with a wistful glance, as if she was

half-afraid to speak.

"Wear your new dress of course," plainly answered the widow Day.

"But, mother, it's only calling."

"Then, my dear, you must sent calico at

that still, it will give you got, Nelly."

"And the girls are all going, 'mammy;

even the Holdridge and their New York

companions."

Mr. Day turned a pleasant, keen face

toward her daughter, looked at her steadily

for a minute with a faint smile lurking

about her lips, and then answered, with the

New York people's way of speaking,

"But it isn't well," Nelly, with a lit-

tle vexed laugh. "I don't like to go, mam-

my, dear where my company will be assem-

bled of me."

I should certainly stay at home,"

was the mother's answer.

"Oh, mother!"

Mr. Day got up and came across the

room. Corrie, his maid, was

at the door, a little girl, looking

in the face. You own two calico dresses

and a black silk and gray merino; the

merino is too heavy, and you can't afford

it. The silk is trimmings after Holdridge's,

but it's a good fit.

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